



*Reference Services Division of the American Library Association*

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## Reference Standards

Can reference service be measured? The professional literature reveals courageous efforts in the past, but no consensus either in standards or statistics. A new RSD Committee on Standards, activated last fall, met pre-Midwinter, January 27-28 in Chicago. Members are: Henry J. Dubester, chief, General Reference and Bibliography Division, Library of Congress; Neal R. Harlow, librarian, University of British Columbia, and dean-designate, Rutgers University Graduate School of Library Service; Charles Higgins, assistant librarian, State Library, Lansing, Mich.; Blanche Janecek, librarian, High School Library, Laboratory School, University of Chicago; Rose Vainstein, specialist, Library Services Branch, U.S. Office of Education; Mildred Vannorsdall, adult services supervisor, Lane Public Library, Hamilton, Ohio; Samuel Rothstein, assistant librarian, University of British Columbia; Louis Shores, dean, Library School, Florida State University, chairman.

The committee reviewed its charge and decided to reexamine the nature of reference work as a prelude to determining standards. All types of libraries are to be considered. As a first step, the committee has prepared a preliminary statement concerning the "nature and scope of reference service in the United States and Canada." As a second step, the committee is developing a list of activities found to be a part of the reference service of outstanding libraries of all types. The committee will welcome suggestions. The preliminary statement follows:

1. Reference services in a library should be recognized as a critical responsibility of library administration, specifically organized to ensure the optimum use of the library's collection.

2. Since all functions of a library may be viewed, in ultimate terms, as geared to facilitate use of the library's collections, the distinguishing feature of reference services is in its relationship to the library's patrons. These services are of two essential types—direct and indirect.

3. Direct reference service consists of personal assistance provided to library patrons in pursuit of information. Direct reference service may take one of many forms, each of which may consist of a number of activities, of which only the most frequent and representative are cited below:

(a) *Instruction* in the use of the library and in the use of items in the library's collection. This service may range from demonstration of how to fill out a call slip to explanation of the use of catalogs, bibliographies, and reference works, to assistance in interpreting the contents of materials in the library's collections. The central feature of this instruction, irrespective of its level or its intensity, is to provide guidance and direction in the pursuit of information, rather than providing the information itself.

(b) *Information Service*. This service may range from answering an apparently

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simple question through recourse to an obvious reference source, to supplying information based on search in the collections of the library, combining competence in bibliothecal techniques with competence in the subject of inquiry. The character and extent of library information service will vary with the kind of library, with the patron the library is designed to serve, and with the skill, competence, and professional training of the reference librarian providing the information service. Characteristic functions of information service are finding specific data or facts, interpreting the material or information found, translating, abstracting, literature searching, and others. The central feature of information service, irrespective of its level or its intensity, is to provide an end product in terms of information sought by the library's patron.

4. Indirect reference service comprises the preparation and development of catalogs, bibliographies and all other reference aids which help in providing access to the library's collections and which extend the library's services through cooperation with other, or larger, or more specialized libraries. This

recognizes the significant role of the technical or processing services of the library as indispensable to the reference function.

*General Note:* No schematic rationalization of the reference function in libraries can truly correspond to the realities of day-to-day work with the library's public. The level, character, and variety of reference service that has been traditionally offered by libraries is a function of many factors, including the size of the library, its physical and fiscal resources, as well as its philosophy of service. The foregoing outline offers a concept of reference service which is broader in scope than many libraries can achieve. It recognizes, however, that the reference functions, as described, are in fact provided by libraries large and small, without necessarily being recognized as such. Effective understanding of the nature and the role of reference service in libraries should lead to more efficient and effective development of such service in a climate of total cooperation within a library, and of administrative recognition of its critical role in the overall mission of the library.

## Cleveland Committee Meetings

Two special-interest committee meetings are among others scheduled at the Cleveland convention. The Interlibrary Loan Committee is repeating its no-program, informal conclave which proved so successful in Washington. Opportunity is provided for general discussion of problems and ideas; potential projects for the committee are encouraged for airing. The occasion will be a Dutch-treat dinner on Tuesday evening, July 11, at 6:30 p.m. in the English Room, Pick-Carter Hotel. Price, including tip, will be \$4.75. Advance notice is suggested, to Frederick Arnold, Reference Librarian, Princeton University.

The Book Catalogs Interdivisional

Committee of the RSD and the RTS will have a joint open program meeting Monday, July 10, at 4:30 p.m. Speakers will discuss the theme, "Research Libraries Take a New Look at Book Catalogs." Jesse H. Shera, School of Library Science, Western Reserve University, will speak on the book catalog and the scholar; M. Ruth MacDonald, National Library of Medicine, Washington, D.C., will examine book catalogs and card catalogs; and David C. Weber, Stanford University Library, will look at prospects in the decade ahead. Discussion representatives will be from Edwards Brothers, Ann Arbor, Mich., and G. K. Hall, Boston, Mass..

## **Reference Services Division By-Laws**

### **Article I. Name.**

The name of this body shall be the Reference Services Division of the American Library Association.

### **Article II. Object.**

The Reference Services Division is interested in the improvement and extension of informational, bibliographical, and research activities in all types of libraries, at all levels and in every subject field; reference materials—their production, listing, and evaluation; inquiries and inquirers—their identification, classification, and appraisal; indexes and indexing—their extension and improvement; bibliographies and bibliographic method—their place and development in scholarly investigations. RSD has specific responsibility for—

1. Continuous study and review of reference performance in the different types of libraries.
2. Conduct and sponsorship of activities and projects in reference services.
3. Synthesis of reference activities of all units within ALA and in the various types of libraries so as to produce a unified professional concept of the reference function.
4. Representation and interpretation of reference services both within and without the library profession.
5. Stimulation of the development of librarians engaged in reference services to more distinguished performance, and stimulation of librarians engaged in reference services to participation in appropriate type-of-library divisions.
6. Planning and development of programs of study and research in reference services for the total profession.

### **Article III. Membership.**

Members of this division shall be those members of the American Library Association who designate the Reference Services Division according to the American Library Association Bylaws.

### **Article IV. Meetings.**

Sec. 1. General Meetings. The Division shall hold an annual meeting in connection with the annual conference of the American Library Association.

Sec. 2. Special meetings. Other meetings may be called by the Board of Directors and shall be called by the President on the request of fifty members of the Division. At least one month's notice shall be given, and only business specified in the call shall be transacted.

Sec. 3. Votes by mail. Votes by mail shall be authorized by the Board of Directors between meetings. Such mail votes shall be conducted under the same requirements as votes at meetings. The Board of Directors shall have the authority to set the time limit during which votes will be recorded. In the case of a vote by mail the Board of Directors may designate publication of the ballot in the official publication of the Division as the appropriate method of submitting the matter to the members for their determination.

Sec. 4. Quorum. Fifty members shall constitute a quorum.

### **Article V. Officers.**

Sec. 1. Titles. The officers of the Division shall be a president, a first vice-president (who shall be the president-elect), a second vice-president, and an executive secretary.

Sec. 2. Duties. These officers shall perform the duties pertaining to their respective offices. The executive secretary shall also perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may assign to his office, and he shall submit an annual report to the Division.

Sec. 3. Terms of Office. The president, first vice-president and second vice-president shall serve on a one year term; the executive secretary shall be appointed by the Executive Director of the American Library Association,

with the concurrence of the Board of Directors of this Division, and shall serve at his pleasure.

Sec. 4. Vacancies of Office. A vacancy in the office of president shall be filled for the remainder of the term by the first vice-president (president-elect). This shall not prevent the first vice-president (president-elect) from serving his normal term as president the following year. A vacancy in the office of first vice-president (president-elect) shall be filled only by election of the members. In the case of a vacancy in the office of second vice-president, the office shall remain vacant until the next election.

#### *Article VI. Board of Directors.*

Sec. 1. Composition. The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers, the immediate past-president, the chief officer of each section, the American Library Association councilors elected on nomination of the Division, and three directors at large. The directors at large shall be elected from the Association for three-year terms, which terms shall overlap so as to insure continuity of policy. Councilors shall be members without vote until the last year of their terms, when they shall be voting members; the executive secretary does not have the right to vote.

Sec. 2. Duties. The Board of Directors has authority over the affairs of the Division during the period between meetings, provided however that none of its acts shall conflict with or modify any actions taken by the Division. The Board of Directors shall perform such other duties as are specified in these by-laws, shall take action necessary in the interest of the Division between meetings and shall report upon its work at the regular meetings of the Division.

Sec. 3. Quorum. A majority of voting members constitutes a quorum of the Board of Directors.

#### *Article VII. Nominations and Elections.*

Sec. 1. Nominating Committee. The

president, with the approval of the Board of Directors, shall appoint a Nominating Committee, which will include a representative of each of the different sections of the Division, to arrange for nomination of candidates for officers of the Division.

Sec. 2. Nominations. The Nominating Committee shall present two candidates for each office to be filled, except those of first vice-president (president-elect) and second vice-president. Names of candidates for these offices shall be presented in a single block of two names. The Nominating Committee shall also present, in accordance with the Bylaws of the American Library Association, candidates for the ALA Council and shall transmit these names to the Nominating Committee of the American Library Association. The Nominating Committee shall, as far as possible, select candidates in such a way as to assure representation of the various groups and interests of the Division in its list of candidates for officers. The Committee shall file nominations (and the written consent of the nominees) with the Division's executive secretary, who shall arrange for publication and distribution of the official ballot in cooperation with the American Library Association. No person shall be nominated who is not a personal member in good standing of the Division at the time of his nomination.

Sec. 3. Additional Nominations. Additional nominations may be made by petitions signed by not fewer than fifty members of the Division and filed with the executive secretary not less than three months before the annual conference of the American Library Association, provided that no person may be nominated who is not at the time of his nomination a member in good standing of the Division.

Sec. 4. Elections. Elections shall be held by mail ballot in accordance with procedures of the American Library As-

sociation. For each office except those of first vice-president (president-elect) and second vice-president, the candidate receiving the largest number of votes cast shall be elected first vice-president (president-elect) and the candidate receiving the next largest number of votes shall be elected second vice-president. In case of a tie vote, the successful candidate shall be determined by lot.

#### Article VIII. Committees.

Sec. 1. Authorization and Discontinuance. The Board of Directors may create and abolish, under such rules as it may adopt for this purpose, standing, special, and joint committees.

Sec. 2. Duties. The Board of Directors shall define the duties of all committees that may be created at the time of establishment; but the president may temporarily add any pertinent and relevant duties to any committee that may be needed to carry on the work of the Division.

#### Sec. 3. Appointments.

- (a) The president shall appoint the members of committees, each of whom shall be an active member in good standing of the Division, with the approval of the Board of Directors.
- (b) Unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors, members of standing committees shall be appointed for terms of three years and may be re-appointed for a second but not a third consecutive term; in no case shall a person serve on a committee for more than six consecutive years. Appointments shall be made in such manner as to provide continuity in membership.
- (c) Each special committee shall continue in existence until its purpose is accomplished or it

is discharged by the Division or by the Board of Directors.

#### Article IX. Sections.

Sec. 1. Sections. Any group of twenty-five or more members of the Division, representing a field of activity in general distinct from those of the then existing sections and within the scope of the Division's field of interest, may organize a section upon receiving approval from the Board of Directors. Sections shall be composed only of Division members.

Sec. 2. Discontinuance. The Board of Directors may dissolve a section when in its opinion the usefulness of the section has ceased.

#### Article X. Chapters.

State, regional or local chapters of the Reference Services Division may be established by the Board of Directors on the petition of twenty-five or more members of the Division in the territory within which the chapter is desired and according to the following regulations:

- (a) Each chapter may establish its own constitution and bylaws, provided that they are not inconsistent with those of the Division or those of the American Library Association.
- (b) Chapters may be discontinued by action of the Board of Directors of the Division.
- (c) At least one meeting shall be held each year, or every two years in the case of regional or other groups which normally hold biennial meetings.
- (d) Each chapter shall send a report of its meetings to the executive secretary of the Division at least two months before the annual conference of the American Library Association.

#### Article XI. Amendments.

Sec. 1. Proposals. Amendments to

these bylaws shall be proposed by the Board of Directors, the Bylaws Committee, or a written petition signed by not less than ten members.

Sec. 2. Notice. The text of any proposed amendment shall be given to the membership not less than one month before the meeting at which it is to be acted upon. Said notice shall be given directly to each member.

Sec. 3. Voting. The bylaws shall be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present and voting at the regular meeting of the Division.

Sec. 4. Unless otherwise specified, amendments to the bylaws shall become effective when approved by the membership.

#### Article XII. Years.

Sec. 1. Membership Year. The membership year of the Association shall be the calendar year.

*The RSD Bylaws Committee recommends that the proposed Bylaws be printed for membership consideration before their presentation for adoption at the next RSD membership meeting at annual conference.*

Respectfully submitted  
William Jackson, Chairman  
RSD Bylaws Committee

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## History Section Activated

The Cleveland convention will witness the first official meeting of the Reference Services Division's new History Section. Scheduled for 4:30 p.m., July 10, the program will include election of officers and discussion of the section's potential activities. Principal speaker will be Mr. Robert Land, Chief, General Reference and Bibliography Division, Library of Congress; his topic will be "Reference Work with American Historical Manuscripts."

A proposed statement of purpose is now being studied for possible adoption by the section. In its present draft, it sets forth the primary concerns and contributions in which the section feels in-

terest: "The History Section of the Reference Services Division represents the subject interests of reference librarians, archivists, bibliographers, documentalists, and historians engaged in reference and research. It is concerned with current reference problems at all levels, and seeks to bring together the needs of appropriate departments of large municipal and university libraries, archives and history departments of state agencies, historical societies and special historical collections, and the local history interests of small public, school and business libraries. It attempts through its programs to give attention to the improvement of methods of historical reference services."

## Salmagundi

The New York State Library's *Checklist of Books and Pamphlets in Science and Technology* (its holdings in the Dewey 500 and 600 classes) contains 81,800 titles and is an up-to-date list of holdings through 1959. Its *Checklist in American History* is the library's holdings of books and pamphlets on the history of the Americas—approximately 24,500 titles. Both exclude uncataloged materials, periodicals, newspapers, and other types of serials.

Of use to simplify inter-library loans, assist other N.Y. libraries in planning acquisition programs, save duplication of expensive items or seldom used books, or as a reference tool, these checklists will also interest libraries considering the possibility of printed catalogs, for the library plans to continue preparing punched cards of the checklists until its entire collection is recorded and then to issue a complete catalog in one alphabet.

The Air Force Academy's Department of Aeronautics and the Academy Library Staff, has completed the third revision of *Astronautics: Special Bibliography Series*, No. 5. Included are three lists: the subject headings under which astronautics information can be found in the Academy library, periodicals in the library dealing with aeronautics, and periodical indexes, with subject headings for each.

The inquiry about "King John's apples" yielded several possible sources. The passage from Franklin's *The Whistle* is: "Yet I ought to have charity for these unhappy people, when I consider that, with all this wisdom of which I am boasting, there are certain things in the world so tempting, for example, the apples of King John, which happily are not to be bought; for if they were put to sale by auction, I might very easily be led to ruin myself in the purchase, and find that I had once more given too much for the whistle."

Miss Edith R. Alexander, Reference Department U.S. Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, and Miss Loretta L. Kelleher, Reference Librarian, Freeport Memorial Library, Long Island, New York, suggested *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*: p. 43, "Apple-john . . ."

*The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. I, p. 405, supports this reference as does Schmidt, *Shakespeare-Lexicon*, vol. I, p. 46: "A sort of apple which keeps long, but becomes very withered."

John J. Sullivan, Reference Department, Free Public Library, Bayonne, New Jersey, referred to Amacher's *Franklin's Wit and Folly*, p. 46. This leads to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, John (1161?-1216) King of England, vol. 10, p. 853: "Before the end of the century it was generally believed that he [King John] was poisoned by a monk of Swineshead (Wikes) and there is a legend that as he intended to violate a nun, the sister of the abbot, a monk gave him three poisoned pears while he sat at table talking wildly about the scarcity of food which he intended to bring upon the country." Amacher concludes that Franklin was in error!

Harry Bauer, Professor of Librarianship, University of Washington, citing William Cabell Bruce's *Benjamin Franklin Self Revealed*, 2d ed. vol. 1, p. 229 and vol. 2, p. 479 comes closest, Salmagundi thinks. In the second reference, Bruce writes, "The reader has already had occasion to know what kind of fruit these apples of King John were, and in whose orchard they grew."

American Concert Choir and Choral Foundation, Inc., 101 West 31st Street, New York 1, New York, has in progress *Checklist of Holdings of Interest to Choral Conductors*. It will include a guide to books, encyclopedias, and periodicals listing choral compositions and a guide to articles and books which describe performance practices

during baroque and classical eras.

Miss Ruth Walling, Emory University Library, has suggested that "Notes on Latin Dictionaries," by John L. Heller in *Classical Journal*, vol. 56, p.171-176, January 1961, is, as the author says, a "Consumers Research Report" on Latin dictionaries.

To encourage the U.S. Office of Education's *Teaching About the United Nations in the United States: 1956-1959 Report* with its descriptions of U.N. materials in a group of teacher-training institutions, lists of organizations, with their addresses, by states, and list of U.N. Depository libraries in the U.S. should be helpful.

Salmagundi would like to know the source of:

"They [schoolma'ms] aspire to teach it as bridge whist, the American Legion flag-drill and double entry bookkeeping are taught. They fail as ignominiously as *That Athenian of legend who essayed to train a regiment of grasshoppers in the goose-step.*" — "Literature and the Schoolma'm" by H. L. Mencken in *Prejudices: Fifth Series*, 1926.

*The Catalogue of the John Carter Brown Library in Brown University*, 3d ed., in 3 volumes, will be available in a reprint edition this fall. Kraus Reprint Corporation prices pre-August 1, 1961 orders at \$58.50, thereafter \$69.30.

Prof. Chauncy D. Harris, of University of Chicago has compiled *An Annotated World List of Selected Current Geographical Serials in English*. Selected from 110 current geographical serials published in English and 111 published in other or multiple languages, the listed titles provide a selection list for colleges and universities.

Order from Department of Geography, University of Chicago, Chicago 37, Illinois. Price, 25c.

Characteristic vocabularies and important concepts in all the media of mass communication have been brought together in *A Mass Communications Dictionary*. (\$6.00) Howard Boone Jacobson, Chairman, Department of Journalism, University of Bridgeport is the editor and Philosophical Library the publisher.

Emerson Greenway, Free Library of Philadelphia, has announced a new reading list entitled, *Of Grace and of Truth*, a Catholic reading list. It is a companion to the Protestant one, *A Faith in Our Times*, released last November. A Jewish list is in preparation.

The Probability Kit, announced by the Edmund Scientific Company of Barrington, New Jersey, is a pleasant and exciting way to establish the averages of recurrence, "odds making" to come. Containing a working scale model roulette wheel, a slot machine, chuck-a-luck equipment, as well as cut-out cardboard for assembling giant dice and a package of shot for probability board demonstrations. The kit also includes instructions, suggestions for experiments, and a history of some of the laws and games of chance. This educational (?) device could interest teachers, students, and devotees of higher mathematics. Price, \$4.00.

The Gale Research Company, for its forthcoming *Directory of Special Libraries and Information Centers* will soon mail questionnaires to all special libraries, special collections, and information centers in United States and Canada. Dr. Anthony T. Kruzus, Department of Library Science, University of Michigan will serve as editor.

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